

Technology Transfer Center Flagger Training Program

Flagger Handbook



Illinois Department of Transportation

To You, The Flagger

You have been chosen as a TRAFFIC FLAGGER because your supervisor feels you are physically able, mentally alert, and sufficiently commanding in appearance to be obeyed by the motoring public.

Flaggers have direct responsibility for the safe passage of traffic in a work area. The lives of workers, the traveling public and yourself depend upon your alertness and ability to control traffic with the STOP/SLOW paddle. Flaggers should attempt to immediately warn the work crew when a motorist disregards a flagger's signal causing an emergency. Flaggers shall be on duty during the installation and removal of equipment and traffic control devices located on any portion of a through traffic lane.

Yours is an important position and is one to be carried out with authority and dignity.

This handbook has been prepared to assist you in understanding your duties and should be properly studied and available for immediate reference. Remember, your fellow workers and the motoring public are depending on you.

The Flagger and Public Relations

- ✎ When stopping traffic, you should advise the first motorist of the situation in a brief, courteous statement, including an estimate of the delay.
- ✎ Don't lean on vehicles or argue with the occupants. Keep your voice calm. Your job demands full concentration.
- ✎ If any driver refuses to obey instructions, the vehicle description and license number should be recorded and the circumstances reported immediately to your supervisor. If the situation warrants, the local police should be notified.
- ✎ All work area signs required by Part VI, Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and other approved traffic control plans (contract plans, Work Site Protection Manual, etc.), must be installed prior to beginning any operation. You should not be required to control traffic without proper placement of these signs. The signs must be removed or covered when they are not actually in effect.

Sign Placement

Traffic control signs should be positioned where they will be most effective, allowing motorists adequate time for response.

A basic guide on open highways is to place the first sign the motorist sees 1500 feet in advance of the condition that affects him. The sign nearest the work site should be placed 500 feet in advance of the restriction. Additional signs should be spaced 500 feet to 1000 feet apart.

On city streets this spacing should be approximately one-half the above distances.

The above is a basic guide.

Flagger Duties

- ✎ One of the two flaggers should be designated as the chief flagger for purposes of coordinating movement.
- ✎ Flaggers shall be able to communicate with each other verbally, by means of signals that cannot be mistaken for flagging signals or by two-way radios. Headsets shall not be used. The use of cellular phones while performing flagging duties is prohibited.
- ✎ Where the end of a one-lane section is not visible from the other end, the last vehicle can be identified by description or license and relayed to the other flagger.
- ✎ Each flagger must be stationed at least 100 feet from the work crew and should be visible to oncoming traffic for a minimum of 500 feet.

Flagger Equipment

Appearance - when on duty you should present a neat appearance, be appropriately dressed for protection from the sun, flying objects, and insects.

REMEMBER - a neat appearance gains respect and makes your job more effective.

Flaggers must utilize the following equipment at a minimum. Your employee safety code should be consulted for any additions to these minimum requirements:

✧ STOP/SLOW paddle

✧ A high visibility vest meeting the ANSI/ISEA Standard 107-1999 Class 2 for High Visibility Safety Apparel

✧ 2-way radios when needed



Flagger Equipment

- ☞ Night Operations: Red lantern or flashlight with red wand. Retroreflective clothing which highlights the entire range of body movements. The flagger station shall be fully illuminated during nighttime operations.

Flaggers must comply with all current and applicable OSHA , MUTCD, and local standards which may apply.



STOP/SLOW Paddle

- When directing traffic, flaggers should use a stop/slow paddle with type A sheeting that is reflective and a minimum of 18 inches.
- STOP/SLOW paddles should be properly maintained and cared for to ensure condition and legibility (must be able to read from a 400 foot minimum distance)

Please Note: Octagonal STOP/SLOW paddles are required.



Two Lane-Two Way Roadways

- ✎ The flagger stands in a safe position on the shoulder and is visible to traffic.
- ✎ The flagger faces traffic and extends the paddle in a vertical position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body, aiming the full STOP face to oncoming traffic.
- ✎ The flagger should look directly at the approaching driver and shall raise and expose the palm of the free hand above the shoulder level to indicate the vehicle is required to stop.
- ✎ After the first vehicle has stopped, the flagger then moves to a position near the centerline so the STOP face can be seen by approaching drivers.

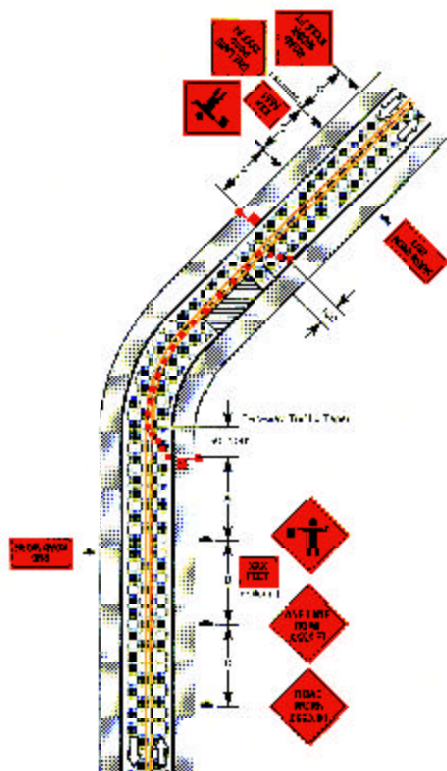
Stopping Traffic



One-Way Traffic Control

1. When traffic traveling in both directions must for a short distance use the same lane, alternate traffic flow must be used allowing traffic from each direction to pass through the constricted section.
2. At a spot obstruction, such as an isolated pavement patch, most movement may be self regulating.
3. Whenever the obstruction is of any length, flaggers must control the traffic so that the vehicles will not meet head on and so that delays will not be excessive.
4. Select control points at each end will allow easy passing of opposing lanes of traffic.

Sample from MUTCD



When It Is Safe For Traffic To Proceed

- ✎ When releasing traffic the flagger should move to a safe position on the shoulder or in the closed lane and face traffic.
- ✎ The flagger will then hold the paddle in a vertical position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body and rotate the paddle so that the full SLOW face is aimed at traffic.
- ✎ Traffic movement should be waved forward by moving the free arm across the body and using the slow down signal to keep speeds down.

Starting Traffic



To Alert or Slow Traffic

- ✎ The flagger stands in a safe position on the shoulder, visible to and facing traffic.
- ✎ The flagger holds the STOP/SLOW paddle in a vertical position with the arm extended horizontally away from the body, so the full SLOW face is aimed at traffic.
- ✎ For added emphasis, the free arm may be extended horizontally away from the body and raised and lowered with the palm down, indicating that the vehicle should slow down.

Slowing Traffic



Multi-lane Roadways

- ✎ Traffic control devices shall be used to control traffic through the work zone.
- ✎ When used on multi-lane roadways the flagger's responsibility is to protect workers while maintaining traffic speeds at a reasonable level.
- ✎ While flagging on a multi-lane road, the flagger must remain on the shoulder or in the closed lane.
- ✎ Flaggers on multi-lane projects shall be positioned 200' in advance of the work operation.

Red Flag Procedures

The red flag shall be RED, 24" x 24" on a 3 foot Staff and shall be limited to daytime emergency situations only.

To stop traffic: The flagger shall face traffic and extend the flag horizontally across the traffic lane in a stationary position so that the full area of the flag is visible hanging below the staff. The free arm shall be raised, the palm of the left hand above the shoulder level toward the approaching traffic.

When it is safe for traffic to proceed: The flagger shall stand parallel to traffic with the flag and arm lowered from view of the driver, and shall motion traffic to proceed with the free arm. Flag shall not be used to signal traffic to proceed.

To alert or slow traffic: The flagger shall face traffic and slowly wave the flag in a sweeping motion of the extended arm from shoulder level to straight down, without raising the arm above a horizontal position. The flagger shall keep the free hand down.

Flagger Rules to “Live” By

- ✎ FLAGGERS shall be trained prior to performing flagger duties.
- ✎ FLAGGERS on two lane highways shall be no more than one mile apart.
- ✎ FLAGGERS shall be relieved at appropriate intervals to avoid fatigue.
- ✎ FLAGGERS shall not mingle with the work crew.
- ✎ FLAGGERS shall not leave their post unless authorized to do so or when replaced by another flagger.
- ✎ FLAGGERS shall never turn their back on approaching traffic until the motorist has come to a complete stop.
- ✎ FLAGGERS shall not sit while on duty.

Flagger Rules to “Live” By

- 📖 FLAGGERS should always maintain two safety escape routes.
- 📖 FLAGGERS must be visible to oncoming traffic at all times. You may see them but they may not see you.

To be visible:

- 📖 Avoid standing in the shade. This dramatically reduces your visibility.
- 📖 Avoid standing in front of your equipment. You as a person/flagger disappear.
- 📖 Move your placement in advance of curves, horizontal and vertical. Otherwise, people will not see you in time to slow down.

Flagger Notes

Flagging procedures for multi-lane closures, urban areas and/or other work activities that are not outlined in this manual and require special consideration should be furnished by the flagger's supervisor.

Any driver that fails to stop when signaled to do so by a flagger or fails to remain in such position until signaled to proceed is in violation of Section 11-908 (c) of the Illinois Vehicle Code. If the situation warrants, a description of the driver and the vehicle's license number should be recorded and the circumstances reported immediately to the flagger's supervisor.

Additional flaggers may be added if required due to intersection or sight restrictions.

When flaggers are out of sight of each other, direct communications shall be maintained with either two-way radios or additional flaggers.

Headsets shall not be used.

Additional Information

Additonal flagger information can be obtained from
the following websites

Illinois Department of Transportation
<http://www.dot.state.il.us>

Technology Transfer Center
<http://www.dot.state.il.us/blr/t2.html>

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
(MUTCD) <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov>

For further flagger training information contact:

Illinois Department of Transportation
Bureau of Local Roads and Streets
Technology Transfer Center
2300 South Dirksen Parkway, Room 205
Springfield, Illinois 62764
217/785-2350

Printed by the authority of the State of Illinois
November 2003
2,000 copies